

Appl. No. 09/993,195  
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**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the abstract with the following amended paragraph:

-- ~~The present invention discloses a~~An image compression device and method employing a prior knowledge to split an image inputted from a camera or other input media into at least two hierarchical images, and compressing each split image according to each corresponding hierarchy, to improve an image compression performance, while the image compression device of the present invention ~~comprises~~includes an image receiver for storing image data inputted from a video camera or other image monitoring device, a knowledge database for storing the image data to a database in an appropriate form by applying a prior knowledge, a hierarchical separator for splitting each of the input image in the database into several hierarchical images respectively by applying a storage information in the knowledge database, a hierarchical image storage for storing each of the split hierarchical images respectively, a hierarchical image compressor for compressing each of the split hierarchical images, a compressed data storage for storing the compressed data, a decoder for decompressing and restoring the compressed data, a predicted decompression image storage for storing the restored data, and a knowledge database controller for applying the predicted decompressed image stored in the predicted decompression image storage, to manage and update information of the knowledge database.--